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## MINUTES FOR MARCH 18, 2008 MEETING OF THE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Members Present:** Erwin Mack, Lt. Ron Smith, Alan Migdall, Ben Stutz for Councilmember Ervin, Alyce Ortuzar, James D'Andrea for Sylvia Morrison MCPS, Kenneth B.J. Hartman, Charles Kines, John Howley, and Linda Sobel Katz. **Members Absent:** Bill Frick, Chair; William Bronrott; Vice Chair, Gerald Donaldson, Steve Friedman and Peter Moe for Timothy Richards MSHA. **County Staff:** Art Holmes, Tom Pogue, Andrea Turner and Fred Lees. **Guest:** Richard Hoyer for Councilmember Trachtenberg and Mary Kendall from MD International Corridor CSAFE

### Agenda Items:

1. Introductions
2. Recap of meeting with County Executive
3. Multijurisdictional Pedestrian Safety Committee (MPSC)
4. New CountyStat Initiative and Focus on Pedestrian Safety Improvement Performance
5. Update on County's Pedestrian Safety Program
6. Status of new State Safe Routes to Schools Grants
7. Other Pedestrian Safety News and Issues
8. Committee comment/Issue follow-up/Open discussion/ identification future topics
9. Adjourn

Item: 1. Introductions. The meeting came to order at approximately 7:05 p.m. Members present introduced themselves. With both the chair and vice-chair absent, DPWT staff facilitator of the meeting Tom Pogue chaired the meeting.

Item: 2. Recap of meeting with County Executive. Mr. Pogue advised the group of the summary in their meeting packet of the meeting with the County Executive that five members of the committee held on March 4. Mr. Mack asked about how to convey the committee's concerns about their level of support for pedestrian safety in the curriculum. He felt the school principals take the position that they are not able to be specific about pedestrian safety, even as it relates to their students, since there is no subject designation for this in the curriculum. They maintain that they may not deviate from the assigned curriculum, unless permitted to do so by the Superintendent. Mr. Howley requested a school representative be invited to attend a future committee meeting to discuss school policies toward students walking and biking to school and their capital budgeting. Mr. Kines noted each school has their own individual policies for students biking, and Mr. Migdall said some schools even ban student biking to school. Mr. Stutz asked if someone from DPWT could also discuss the department's safe routes to school program. Ms. Ortuzar said many schools don't have a safe, walkable way for kids to reach their building. Discussion turned to County funding for pedestrian safety and the County Executive's proposed budget for such in FY09. Mr. Holmes responded that his staff

would provide an easy to understand briefing to the committee at their next meeting. Ms. Ortuzar asked if the County was using LED lights in its streetlights. Mr. Lees responded that DPWT was not using them currently but was testing them for the future.

Item: 3. Multijurisdictional Pedestrian Safety Committee (MPSC). Mr. Mack introduced Ms. Mary Kendall for a presentation from both on the MPS committee and its activities. He noted a terrible pedestrian tragedy on New Hampshire Avenue of several years back prompted him to form the MPSC and work toward achieving some progress in publicizing pedestrian safety and in obtaining engineering improvements in certain locations near the Montgomery County/Prince George's County border where pedestrian collisions had occurred. One such area, the Takoma Langley Crossroads, was detailed. Ms. Kendall noted this was one of 45 locations across the state identified as part of the State's Collaborative Supervision and Focused Enforcement program. Together they presented a PowerPoint slide show with numerous photos of pedestrian situations and actions taken to lessen the chances for pedestrian collisions. Questions arose as to whether or not the State was considering narrowing roads to accommodate pedestrians. Mr. Mack indicated he did not believe so. Mr. Stutz suggested the PSAC be briefed at some point on the recommendations of the Road Code Committee.

Item: 4. New CountyStat Initiative and Focus on Pedestrian Safety Improvement Performance. In the interest of time, Mr. Pogue recommended this briefing be rescheduled to the May meeting.

Item: 5. Update on County's Pedestrian Safety Program. Mr. Pogue briefed the committee on the County Executive's funding proposal for his Pedestrian Safety Initiative and discussion ensued. Mr. Migdall asked about the actual level of funding as compared to the level the Exec announced at his December 2007 news conference for his Pedestrian Safety Initiative. Mr. Pogue reported that the Executive had sent to Council a request for \$800,000. Mr. Pogue acknowledged that this was below the Initiative's original proposal of some \$3.8 million, but that any program that received stable funding from the previous year plus an additional increase was very fortunate given the budget situation facing the County. This should be seen as an indication of the Executive's desire to improve pedestrian safety. Mr. Migdall expressed concern that that would not be enough to have a real impact on the injury rate. Mr. Holmes explained that getting any increase in these difficult budget times is an indication of commitment. Mr. Holmes further said he would ask County staff to brief the committee fully on recommended funding requests and recent year's spending levels. Mr. Pogue updated the committee on DPWT steps to advertise the currently vacant Pedestrian Safety Coordinator position. He and Mr. D'Andrea recapped a recent training session of 29 Northwest High School students in Safe Walking techniques. Using a program suggested by the PSAC, and pioneered at Blair High School, these students will in turn train elementary school students within their cluster. Lt. Smith reported on enforcement activities in the 5<sup>th</sup> District MCPD near Seneca Valley High School and Northwest High School on Great Seneca Highway. Mr. Stutz asked with the Police cross check pedestrian collision data with pedestrian volume data. Lt. Smith responded that MCPD has tried in the past to

work with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration but to date have not been successful in this exercise.

Item: 6. Status of new State Safe Routes to Schools Grants. Mr. Pogue reported he is revising the second grant DPWT has applied for—the so called Grant B—toward obtaining final State clearance to spend funds on engineering actions at 11 target schools. The State has previously approved the first grant—Grant A—to fund a SRTS Coordinator and appropriation authority is being requested now from the County Council. Finally, Mr. Pogue is beginning to work on a third grant—Grant C—that will fund engineering, enforcement, and educational work at additional targeted schools.

Item: 7. Other Pedestrian Safety News and Issues. Ms. Turner discussed acquisition of retro-reflective equipment by DPWT to disseminate at targeted groups in the county. She also displayed the donated reflective packets that DPWT received as a result of the contacts made by Mr. Donaldson. 125 of these packets were provided for the Northwester HS students for their use in training elementary students and to a non-profit group having a community fair.

Item: 8. Committee comment/Issue follow –up/Open discussion/ identification future topics. Mr. Kines noted and Mr. Hoyer agreed that bicycle and pedestrian issues were slated to be on the agenda of the Road Code Context Sensitive Committee earlier this spring but that this had seemingly slipped from the regular agenda of the group and had not been rescheduled. Mr. Kines believed that discussion should be re-inserted onto the agenda of that ongoing group. Various PSAC members also sit on this group and agreed to raise the issue. Mr. Pogue will check with DPWT's Division of Capital Development Chief who is stakeholder of this group. Ms. Katz noted that there were two subcommittees of the PSAC who were formed to take up issues dealing with education and engineering. New member Ken Hartman, introduced himself as the new Director of the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Service Center and representative of the regional service centers in general.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m. The next meeting of the Advisory Committee will take place on May 20, 700p.m., at the EOB's 10<sup>th</sup> floor conference room.